

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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## FIFTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL HELD

One-hundred constituent members and forty associate members gathered at Aoyama Gakuin University March 23-24 for the annual meeting.

Among things decided at the meeting:

- 1) A Center for the Study of Religions was approved. Dr. Darley Downs was made chairman of a committee of nine appointed as a preparation committee. Others included on the committee are Mr. Hirai, Mr. Ariga, Professor Detsuron (Kyoto University) and also Mr. Thompson, who began the present center. Formerly the study center was for Buddhists but plans are now for the NCC to use the house as a center. Their aim will be to study religions in Japan and their influence on the culture. They also hope to bring about meetings with leaders of these other religions and Christian leaders. A further purpose is to publish a book of Christian apology aimed at the non-Christian religions.
- 2) NCC opposes support for Yasukuni Shrine. After the war, Yasukuni Shrine also became a separate religion and could not receive government support. However, a movement has gradually been getting stronger for government support to the shrine, viewing it as an exception to the religions as listed in the law. NCC is opposed to Yasukuni Shrine getting support as also they were opposed to Ise Shrine getting special support feeling they should keep their religious nature and that the







freedom of religions should be upheld!

3) Appeal to Education Ministry to curb juvenile delinquency. There is an increase in juvenile delinquency in Japan and also an increasing moral confusion. Minors under 20 years old are not allowed to purchase liquor or tobacco. However, the law is not very well defended and is very loose. It was decided that the law should be not only defended better but possibly made stronger. Further that the Education Ministry and other related bodies should be approached concerning this problem. This law has been in effect for a long time and before the war there was strong control. Now, however, it is hard to maintain control and so there is confusion in the moral life. The 'Moral Law' was the backbone of morality in Japan-but now there is no backbone and many religions. Certainly this area is a mission for the Church.

4) Appeal to the Government to strengthen anti-prostitution law.. Four years ago the anti-prostitution law officially became law. But it has many weaknesses - a 'law of zaru' (kitchen strainer) having many holes. There has not been too good a result. Mrs. Takegami, WCTU representative and also Mrs. Kubushiro requested the NCC to appeal to the government to revise the present law and to strengthen it.

5) Organize a special commission of Christian members of the Diet with a hope of making them more active in the government in future.

6) Mr. Hirai was asked to be General Secretary. At the present time he is a 'non-regular' temporary member of the staff. Although he was officially asked, he will not decide personally until after the Lutheran Church to which he belongs has its annual meeting in May.

7) The report of the two year study of the 'Study of Evangelism' was postponed pending completion until next year. Sections under study are: 'Theology of Mission' - Chairman Dr. Kuwada; 'Situation of Churches' - Chairman Rev. Kikaku Shimamura; 'Study of the Object of Evangelism' - chairman Rev. Takihiko Yamakita, 'Method of Evangelism' - chairman Takeo Katsube, and 'Japanese Culture and Christian Evangelism' - chairman Rev. Yoshimitsu Endo. The report will be published in book form and plans are to translate it into English.

#### CHURCH STATISTICS AS OF JANUARY 1960

Protestant denominations	71
Total churches ( including 1,804 preaching points )	6,745
Pastors	5,099
Missionaries	1,242
Church members	378,621

( If no reply was received last year's report was used; further, this includes the Greek Orthodox as a member of the World Council )

United Church of Christ	1,568
Episcopal	363
Spirit of Jesus Church ( Murai )	247
Southern Baptist	174

United Church of Christ	pastors	2,292
" " " "	missionaries	395
" " " "	members	183,458







Churches with over 10,000 members

Spirit of Jesus Church

Greek Orthodox

Episcopal

Southern Baptist

36443

35068

46317

13044

( According to the annual report only 5 churches have more than 10,000 members, 28 denominations have less than 500 members and 4 denominations have less than 100 members ).

## DOUBTS ABOUT THE ARGUMENT AGAINST THE REVISION OF THE SECURITY TREATY

Professors Tagami and Ohira both Christians, were co-editors of a statement that was published and also appeared in the English Japan Times in December of last year. The condensation of their position below is a revised statement appearing in this month's JIYU magazine. Professor Ohira has spoken many places expressing his views. Last year he spoke in the Ogikubo Church in Tokyo and last month he addressed the language school students. He felt that the revision will be passed in the Diet, but if it were subjected to a general referendum it would probably be defeated on emotional and sensational grounds. He further cautioned that anti-Americanism is getting stronger.

Only seven signed the original statement that grew out of a study group of twenty, where-as 2,300 professors signed an anti-revision statement. However, he still feels that 50-60 % of the University professors are pro-American.

In spite of the fact that the majority seems to be against the revision and that most of the demonstrations are against the revision, we felt it would be beneficial to hear another Japanese point of view concerning this problem.

JIYU ( Summary Translation of Article )

March 1960 issue

The following is the summary of the Anzen Hosho Kenkyukai's (Society for the Study of Security) statement issued on January 12, 1960. The statement was drawn up jointly by Professors Masao Ichimata (Waseda University), Zengo OHIRA (Hitotsubashi University), Kengo YOSHIMURA (Waseda University), Joji TAGAMI (Hitotsubashi University), Naokich TANAKA (Hosei University), Mitsuo MAEBARA (Keio University) Kenzo KIGA (Keio University).

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We members of the Society for the Study of Security, who are specializing in the study of international law, international politics and international economy, began to make a study of the pending issue of the Security Treaty last autumn and have reached the conclusion that the revision of the present Security Treaty is necessary. Now we would like to announce publicly our stand on the revision of the Treaty by taking up the following seven doubts.

1) Possibility of one-sided abrogation of the Treaty: Opponents to the revision of the security Treaty contend that our neutrality should be realized through the abrogation of the Treaty, but one-sided abrogation of treaties is not recognized from the standpoint of international law. We would like to get them to explain especially the legal ground on which the one-sided abrogation is based. It is impossible to abrogate the present Treaty in accordance with our will since its effective term is indefinite, but the new Treaty is significant in the sense that the







period of time is fixed at 10 years anyway.

2) Conditions required to realize Japan's neutrality: It is argued that tension in Asia will be relaxed and Japan's security guaranteed if Japan voluntarily stands neutral by hampering the revision of the Security Treaty. But are there actually all objective conditions required to enable Japan to stand neutral? As to the moral principle of Japan's diplomacy, we believe that it is advisable to adopt the spiritually independent policy, which is neither pro-Soviet nor pro-American, from the standpoint of promoting national interests. As to the security system of the world, we take the stand, however, that Japan is not provided with concrete conditions enough to stand neutral immediately.

3) Japan's security system which can be substituted for the Security Treaty: The U.S. - Japan security system has many defects, to be sure, but, apart from these defects, we must also highly estimate its merits when we consider its actual achievements in contributing to the maintenance of peace and security of our country during the past eight years marked by the frequent occurrence of dangerous events in the Far East. If there is any actually effective system which can immediately replace the U.S. - Japan Security Treaty system, we beg to be informed concretely of that measure for security.

4) Participation in forcible measures taken by the UN: We believe that it is selfish to insist on utilizing actions taken by the UN for security instead of being prepared to participate willingly in them. We would like to hear the view on Japan's preparedness to participate in the forcible actions taken by the UN. We believe that it is contradictory to avoid participating as much as possible in the forcible actions to be taken by the UN while adopting the policy to ask the UN to guarantee Japan's security in case of emergency.

5) Outlook on the relaxation of tension in Asia: With international relations heading for relaxation of tension, it is argued that the principle of peaceful coexistence between the two systems will sway the world, but the important thing to our country is the outlook on the relaxation tension in Asia. In this connection, the Chinese Communist stand becomes important, but what do the opponents to the revision of the Security Treaty think of the strong policy which Communist China is adopting of late? We are inferior to none in desiring the adjustment of diplomatic relations with Communist China. But when we deal with Communist China from the national standpoint, we believe that it is important to see to it that we are not dragged into its place by jumping on incautiously.

6) Degree of economic dependence on the Free World: If those who are opposed to the revision of the Security Treaty do not care in the least about the political and economic pressure which the U.S. may apply to Japan in retaliation for the one-sided abrogation of the Security Treaty, they would be considered as making thoughtless judgment ignoring the actual condition of Japan's economy. Even in prewar days, the U.S. was an important trading country to Japan, but as everyone knows, Japan has been depending more than ever before on trade with the U.S. since the end of the war.

Opponents to the revision of the Security Treaty, who attach too much importance to relations with Communist China, hold the view that it is hopeless to establish friendly political and economic relations







with that country unless the Security Treaty is abrogated, but is this not because they interpret Communist China as a peace-loving nation?

7) Political subservience to the Communist bloc: It is maintained that economic relations with the USSR and Communist China would be strengthened by weakening the relations of economic dependence on the U.S. through abrogation of the Security Treaty, but will this not rather make the maintenance of real neutrality difficult by intensifying subservience to the Communist bloc, politically and economically?

Weakening of trade relations with the U.S., which accounts for one fourth of the total of Japan's trade amount, will result in the shortage of the dollar-the international standard currency-and the weakening of trade relations with other countries. We think that it is impossible to maintain neutrality despite such circumstances unless neutrality means in this case special pro-Communist prejudice against the U.S.

#### AVACO: SPONSOR'S FOURTH RADIO PRODUCERS WORKSHOP

For the fourth consecutive year AVACO (the Audio Visual Activities Commission of Japan's National Christian Council) sponsored, on March 25, a special all day workshop and research conference for all the producers of Christian radio programs in Japan. Some thirty representatives of fourteen groups producing twenty-five different programs attended from all over Japan. In the morning lectures on radio and television were given by executives of two of the largest private radio and TV networks, in Japan. Following each lecture the speakers answered with detailed statistics, questions concerning the future of these industries in Japan and how it appears that present trends will affect religious broadcasting.

In the afternoon, a representative of each group producing Christian programs, reported on the programs now being produced, the results, and future plans. In addition, each group played all or part of a tape of its main production and the comparative merits of different formats, different times of the day and different modes of followup were discussed.

#### PROTESTANT ART IN THE NEW CENTURY OF MISSION

On March 3, seventeen Japanese writers and actors met together for the first time at the Christian Center, Ginza, Tokyo. The meeting, unusual in that all 17 of those present are active Christians, was called by the famous author and playwright, Rinzo Shiina, for the specific purpose of developing a Protestant witness in literature, drama and the related arts in Japan. Junichiro Sako, well known critic, was joint host to the meeting.

The new Christian artists' group adopted the name 'Tane no Kai,' which in English becomes something like 'The Seeds.' It is to be a study group composed of men and women who consciously seek to produce Protestant art. These artists aim at a positive witness to Christ through their art. It is not a 'Colleague's circle' nor an 'appreciation' group.

Uncertainty as well as faith led to the establishment of this unusual fellowship. Although Shiina long had believed that the Christian writer must testify to Christ through his work, and himself had tried







to do so, he was dismayed that critics seemed to miss his point. They would describe his art variously as 'strange,' 'mysterious,' or perhaps as a 'mood piece,' but none seemed able to grasp its inner meaning and inspiration.

Such experiences led Shiina to doubt whether a Protestant art movement was possible in Japan. This same doubt was shared by others in movies, theater, TV and literature who found it hard to produce anything that witnessed to the faith. Over against such doubt, however, arose Shiina's growing conviction that only Protestant Christianity can break the impasse experienced by literary realism in this country.

'The Seeds' dream of forming a Christian theatrical group for producing TV and movies in the future. At present they are concerned to discover why men of creative talent of 50 years ago such as Doppo Kunikida, Takeo Arishima and Toson Shimazaki, all of whom were believers, abandoned the church. They also will strive to put their Protestant art movement into effect.

Associated with Shiina and Sako in calling the first meeting were Kaname Takado, editor of 'The Christ Monthly' and secretary of the Japan National Christian Council Literature Commission, and Yoshikiyo Ito, editor of 'The Worker,' a Christian newsheet for laborers published by the United Church of Christ in Japan.



